



Church of the Advent

Advent Advisor

February 2021



Love, Truth, and Light

In the Gospel of John, Jesus' farewell discourse is really a message of love to his friends. Jesus tells them that the Spirit will keep them united with him by interpreting his life and ministry so that, as they grow in the knowledge and love of him and live as his disciples, they will be brought more and more deeply into the life of God. Jesus refers to the Spirit as the Spirit of Truth. To the writer of this gospel, truth is integral to unity. It is the way of love.

The inauguration and the events connected with it rang with calls for unity; in fact, with promises that unity would be the new administration's aim. I thought that the rallying cries and proposals for the initial ground game came across as well-considered, honest and founded upon genuine commitment. I hope that divisiveness eventually will give way to unity. My belief that God is always doing a new thing in his great enterprise of bringing in his kingdom has at least as much to do with my hope as my confidence in the new administration's potential.

A highlight of the inauguration ceremony was Amanda Gorman's exquisite poem and the passion with which she shared it. I trust that further reflection will take me deeper into its meaning, but as she recited it, particular words and phrases conveyed powerful imagery and aroused imaginings that both excited and made me a teary mess. Light danced throughout, into "never ending shade" and vividly portrayed optimism that catastrophe will not "prevail over us." The young poet insisted that "democracy is not broken; it is unfinished" and "there is always light if we're brave enough to see it, brave enough to be it." I am impressed that she did not diminish the misery of the past year or nervous uncertainty about what's ahead. Hopefulness is implied

throughout by the prevalent use of light as sign and symbol for justice. Justice is light signaling that unity is possible because of bridges built that will connect people and bring about unity. The poem has elements that seem to parallel Jesus' love message to his disciples. I heard the Spirit of Truth's voice in Amanda's. While it contains no overt statement of Christian faith, the poem conforms to truth central to our faith: the Light of Christ overcomes darkness, life overcomes death. We are to be light.

Truth is a fragile thing. No matter how honest we generally are or want to be, truth is hard to handle carefully at times, especially when we want to protect others. The claim that "truth will set you free" seems to play out as one fully grasps that truth is the way of love, the way to life that is real.

A young, single mom who just learned she was dying from an aggressive form of inoperable cancer wanted to protect her two children from knowing that until she could no longer conceal the reality of it all. In anticipation of various stages of her declining health for which her doctor had prepared her, she made a mental list of explanations she planned to give her kids. When the time came to explain why she was tired, the woman told her children that she had not been sleeping well. Her nine year-old son replied that he would be very quiet while she took a nap. When she explained that she was losing weight because she was trying to diet, her eleven year-old daughter said that she already was thin enough. When she said that her hair was falling out because older people sometimes lose hair, both children astonished her by declaring that they didn't know anyone else who lost hair except persons with cancer. She knew then and there that, had she gotten away with all of her explanations, at some point in their lives they would realize that part of her legacy was shielding them from the truth, perhaps setting them up to figure it might be appropriate to keep the truth from someone else. She also knew that the three of them would need to hold tight and support one another as her illness pro-

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gressed. So the woman told her children that she had cancer, explained how it affected her and answered their questions honestly. It wasn't easy, but it was the beginning of that little family's adventure of living and loving like they'd never done before, freed up to express and be their authentic selves held in a bond of love. Guided by the Spirit of Truth, for one another and for others they were light.

Around the Church

- ◆ Thank you to **Johnny Miller** for including the Church of the Advent in the National Moment of Mourning for the 400,000+ people who have died in our country from COVID-19 by ringing our church bell on Tuesday, January 19 at 5:30 p. m.
- ◆ **Chloe Tuttle** has accepted a 3-year term on the vestry. She was voted in by acclamation at a morning service in January.
- ◆ Enclosed with the Advisor is the 2021 **budget** and **pledge canvas report**.
- ◆ One of the two units of the **heating system in the sanctuary** is not working. It is predicted that the necessary part to fix it will not be on hand for at least one to two months. With the remaining unit heating a building with a high ceiling, the temperature is in the mid to upper 50's. Personal disposable hand warmers are available.



Service in Planning Stage

Ash Wednesday, February 17, ends the Epiphany season and officially begins Lent.

The forty days of Lent are believed to symbolize the forty days Jesus spent in the wilderness in fasting and prayer after his baptism.

The word "Lent" comes from "Lengtentide," the Old English word for spring.

At this time, plans are still fluid for the traditional Ash Wednesday service with the Imposition of Ashes. Look to *Comings and Goings* for updates.

Ashes are typically imposed by inscribing a cross on the forehead. The imposition of ashes has been practiced on Ash Wednesday since the ninth century.



Outreach for February



The cold days of winter call for hot food.

During February we will be collecting pasta meals in a can to stock the food pantry of the Martin County Department of Social Services.

Requests are posted in the narthex of the church. Offerings may be left anytime in the Love on Wheels wagon during February.

Please contact Kit Reddick if you have need of a personal shopper especially during this time of COVID-19.

She will also be glad to pick up donations left on porches.

Your Help is Needed



Volunteers are needed to serve as **ushers**.

Volunteers are also needed to serve on the **Altar Guild**.

The **Altar Flower Chart** is now available for flower donations.

Please contact the church office if you can help.

Dear Advent Friends,

Thank you for your support and prayers since our mother, Mary Charles, died last week. Thank you all even more for the way in which you continued to love, embrace and include her in your community even after she moved to Cypress Glen. It was extraordinary.

We very much regret that, due to COVID, we cannot hold a public service for her at this time. However, we look forward to celebrating her life with you at a memorial service once it is safe to gather again.



With gratitude,
Lind Coppage Graves and Charles Coppage



Please note: Mary Charles designated the Scholarship Fund at the Church of the Advent as one of her memorials. Please write COA Scholarship Fund on the memo line of your checks.



The Prayer List is found in the notebook marked "Prayer Lists" on the usher's table in the narthex of the church. Names may be added at any time by writing them in the notebook or calling the church office after requesting permission of those for whom prayer is requested. The Prayer List is read aloud weekly at Sunday services. Contact the church office if you wish to have a name added, re-listed, or taken off the list.

Prayer List

Janice
Frankie
Theresa
Jody
Bridgette
Dennis
Bill & Nita
Amber
Lucia
Lanita
Kismet
Elizabeth
Amanda

Birthdays

3 ~ Christine
4 ~ Garrett
16 ~ John
27 ~ Rex



Church of the Advent

Founded 1850

The Rev. Connie Connelly, Priest in Charge
Sunday-Tuesday, 9:30 a. m. – 3:30 p. m.

Lucia Peel, Senior Warden
Don Beach, Junior Warden

Joe Jernigan, Parish Administrator
Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 12 noon

Brandon Woody, Organist/Choir Master

124 West Church Street
P. O. Box 463

Williamston, NC 27892

Telephone: 252.792.2244

Email: advent1850@gmail.com



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

February 7 Morning Prayer 11:00 am

February 8 Vestry Meeting 5:30 pm

February 14 Holy Eucharist 11:00 am

February 17 Ash Wednesday 6:00 pm

February 21 Holy Eucharist 11:00 am

February 28 Holy Eucharist 11:00 am

March 7 Morning Prayer 11:00 am

March 8 Vestry Meeting 5:30 pm

March 10 Evening Prayer 6:00 pm

March 14 Holy Eucharist 11:00 am

March 21 Holy Eucharist 11:00 am

March 28 Holy Eucharist/Palm Sunday 11:00 am

The Church of the Advent is a nurturing, vibrant, and inclusive community inviting spiritual growth through liturgical worship, outreach, and fellowship.

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Lay Schedule

	7 5 Epiphany MP II 11:00 A.M.	14 Last Epiphany HE II 11:00 A.M.	17 Ash Wednesday HE II 6:00 P.M.	21 1 Lent HE II 11:00 A.M.	28 2 Lent HE II 11:00 A.M.
MP Leader	Jane Jernigan				
Lector	Valerie Cooke	Kit Reddick	Chuck Cohen	John Price	Valerie Cooke
Intercessor		Kit Reddick		Lucia Peel	Bill Webb
Chalice Bearer					
Acolytes					
Altar Guild	Bob Greene Janice Greene				
Ushers	Bob Greene Janice Greene				